

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1862

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: SOVIET DUTY ON REMITTANCES FROM ABROAD

REF: (A) MOSCOW 8117; (B) MOSCOW 7925

1. OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT DECREES (SOBRANIYE POSTANOVLENIY PRAVITEL'STVA SSSR), NO. 14, 1975, JUST RECEIVED, CONTAINS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DECREE SIGNED MAY 23 CONCERNING STATE DUTY ON FOREIGN REMITTANCES TO SOVIET CITIZENS. THE DECREE GIVES MORE DETAILED INFORMATION THAN WAS CONTAINED IN MAY 23 UKZSE PUBLISHED IN VEDOMOSTI SSSR, NO. 22, OF MAY 28, 1975 (SEE REFTEL B).

2. INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF DECREE'S OPERATIVE SECTIONS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE - IN CONNECTION WITH THE UKASE OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE USSR SUPREME SOVIET OF MAY 23, 1975, "CONCERNING THE STATE DUTY ON PAYMENTS TO USSR CITIZENS OF SUMS BY CURRENCY TRANSFERS RECEIVED FROM ABROAD," THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DECREES:

(1) TO ESTABLISH THAT THE STATE DUTY ON PAYMENTS OF FUNDS TO SOVIET CITIZENS RECEIVED FROM ABROAD BY CURRENCY TRANSFERS BE LEVIED IN THE AMOUNT OF 30 PERCENT OF THE SUM TRANSFERRED.

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(2) THAT THE USSR MINISTRY OF FINANCE WILL WAIVE PAYMENT OF  
THE DUTY BY CITIZENS WHEN THE TRANSFERS RECEIVED FROM ABROAD  
(CONSIST OF):

ALIMONY PAYMENTS;

FUND RECEIVED AS INHERITANCES;

ROYALTY PAYMENTS;

PAYMENTS RECEIVED AS COMPENSATION FOR INFILDED INJURY;

FUNDS RECOVERED FROM THE SALE OF PERSONAL BELONG-  
INGS OF CITIZENS LIVING ABROAD AND RECEIVED FROM  
OTHER ASPECTS OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS (PO DRUGIM  
DELAM IMUSHCHESTVENNOGE KHARAKTERA), INCLUDING  
FUNDS BELINGING TO RE-EMIGRANTS AND REPATRIATED  
PERSONS;

SUMS TRANSFERRED BY PERSONNEL OF USSR AGENCIES  
LIVING ABROAD AND INDIVIDUALS ON TEMPORARY ASSIGN-  
MENT FROM THE USSR ABROAD;

FUNDS RECEIVED FROM MILITARY PERSONNEL, WORKERS,  
AND STAFFS OF MILITARY UNITS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF  
THE USSR MINISTRY OF DEFENSE;

PENSION FUNDS. END QUOTE

3. COMMENT: LOCAL US CORRESPONDENTS ARE HAVING FIELD DAY WITH  
THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH THEY TAKE AS PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE OF  
SOVIET DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JEWISH (AND OTHER) ACTIVISTS IN  
AREA OF REMITTANCES FROM OVERSEAS. AT LEAST ONE CORRESPONDENT  
(TOH, LOS ANGELES TIMES) BROUGHT MATTER TO ATTENTION OF SENATOR  
JAVITS AT SPASO HOUSE DINNER JULY 1, INDICATING THAT THIS WAS  
"PROOF" OF SOVIET INTENTIONS TOWARD DISSIDENTS. WHILE THIS MAY  
INDEED BE SOVIET PURPOSE, IN EMBASSY'S VIEW IMPOSITION OF DUTY  
ON REMITTANCES PROVES NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN EXACTLY WHAT IT  
SAYS -- WHICH IN FACT IS SOMEWHAT CONFUSING, PARTICULARLY REGARDING  
FIFTH CATEGORY OF EXEMPTIONS. ALSO PRESENTLY UNCLEAR IS WHETHER  
NEW SYSTEM IS INTENDED TO CODIFY LONG-STANDING PRACTICE OF  
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CHARGING UP TO 35 PERCENT FOR CONVERTING HARD CURRENCY INTO  
VNESHPOSYLTORG COUPONS (DESCRIBED IN REF A). OTHER GROUPS WHICH  
WOULD BE AFFECTED INCLUDE ARMENIANS, SOME GEORGians, AND, IN  
GENERAL, ALL OTHER SOVIET CITIZENS RECEIVING REMITTANCES FROM  
ABROAD. CLEARLY THE NEW SET-UP FAVORS THE PRIVILEGED CLASS AND  
DISCRIMINATES AGAINST THE REMAINING 99 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION.  
THUS, WHILE IT IS A RIP-OFF, ACTUAL INTENDED GOAL MAY BE SIMPLY  
TO FIND ANOTHER EASY WAY TO SWELL THE HARD-CURRENCY COFFERS

OF VENSHTORGANK, A DESIRE UNDOUBTEDLY INDUCED BY THE EVER-GREATER NUMBER OF SUCH REMITTANCES TAKING PLACE. IN SUM, ALTHOUGH ACTION MAY WELL BE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, THIS HAS YET TO BE PROVEN.  
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